

MORRIS COUNTY REWIND

There was lots of drama, fast times, big throws, and wild finishes this past week as Morris County's finest produced several sparkling performances.

Let's take a look at some of the highlights.

MENDHAM BREAKS OUT THE BROOM

The **Mendham boys and girls** turned the Bennett Center into a broom party as they swept the team titles at the North Jersey, Section 2, Group 3 Championships last Saturday in Toms River.

Chrisitian Kildal-Brandt and Sierra Tonnesen each opened up the meet with victories and put exclamations on the sweep by anchoring the winning 4x400 relays.

Kildal-Brandt, who has emerged a huge star this season, lit up the track with two individual golds and a sizzling anchor on the winning 4x400 to spark Mendham to a 66-50 victory over Morris County rival Morristown. Randolph was third with 45.

It's the first title for Mendham since winning the Group 2 sectional in 2008.

Kildal-Brandt, a junior, won the 400 in 50.11, finished first in the 800 in 1:58.73, and then ripped a 49.8 anchor in the 4x400 as he came from way back to catch Randolph and bring Mendham across first in 3:30.57.

Kildal-Brandt said the team title was especially satisfying for Mendham after coming up short at the Morris County Relays and the Morris County Track and Field Championships, and finishing second at this meet the previous two years.

“Since we were going up against teams that we lost to in the county meets, this was our redemption meet,” Kildal-Brandt said. “This was really our last big chance to win a championship, so it feels really good to be able to finally win this. And since my freshman year we've come here and lost to Irvington, so to finally win finish on top is a very satisfying feeling for our team.”

Kildal-Brandt had plenty of help from his teammates, like **Spenser Clouse**,

who won the high jump at 6-2, **Paul Ehmann**, second in the 1,600 and fourth in the 3,200, **Tyler Pressl**, fifth in the 800, and **Phil St. Jacques**, fifth in the 3,200.

Sean Lyons led the charge for Morristown, winning the Group 3 1,600 (4:21.15) and 3,200 (9:37.21).

In the girls competition, Mendham used a win in the 3,200 from **Mackenzie Barry** and a 4x400 victory to rally past from Morris County rival West Morris, 78-75, for its second consecutive championship. Randolph finished a strong third with 53.

The victory by Mendham avenged a five point loss to West Morris at the Morris County Championships last month at Drew University.

Tonnesen won the 400 in 1:00.26, and anchored the 4x400 for Mendham.

"We just wanted to go in and get a good time and try to get in the seeded heat for groups," said Tonnesen. "It's a big rivalry (with West Morris). We always see them at meets, they have a good distance team and good sprinters. It was nice to get back at them."

West Morris was led by senior star **Kylene Cochrane**, who smashed two meet records as she won the 1,600 in a Group 3 meet record, N.J. No. 1 and U.S. No. 3 4:54.96, and the 800 in a meet record 2:17.86.

Cochrane will be competing in the high school mile at Saturday's prestigious **Millrose Games** at the New Balance Track and Field Center in New York.

NORTH JERSEY, SECTION 1

GARCIA ROCKS THE EIGHT

Eddie Garcia wasn't very happy after he finished sixth in the 1,600 at the Group 3 meet last Sunday at the Bennett Center. But that made the Mount Olive senior more hungry to come back later and do something big in the 800.

And that's exactly what happened.

Garcia broke from start aggressively, immediately grabbing the race by the throat. It became clear after the first 400 that Garcia was going to win his second straight sectional 800 title. The only thing that remained was whether Garcia could take down his meet record and personal best of 1:59.38.

Garcia got that as he stopped the clock at 1:57.78.

"I have been tired of that 1:59 for the last year, so I really wanted to break my time from last year and get a new personal best," said the Rhode Island-bound Garcia.

Garcia and shot put champion **Matt Kraemer** (48-9 ½) helped spark the Marauders to a fifth place with 30 ½.

VILLA WALSH ROLLS AT THE STATE PREP MEET

Taylor Medd was a double winner and **Monica Benz**, **Christina Pallito**, and **Grace McGurn** all struck gold to lead Villa Walsh to the State Prep B Championship last Sunday at Lawrenceville.

Medd captured the 55 dash (7.59) and the 200 (27.88). Benz was first in the high jump (4-10), Pallito took first in the 400 (63.26), and McGurn placed first in the shot put (a personal best 32-4).

KEEPING TRACK

Keturah Orji of Mount Olive, the No. 1 long and triple jumper in the U.S. this season, showed that she's also tough to beat when her feet stay on the ground when the Georgian-bound star won the 55 dash (7.21) and the 400 (59.29), and ran on the winning 4x400 at the North Jersey, Section 1, Group 3 meet. Orji helped Mount Olive place second to Northern Highlands, 62-46.

Booker McLean was third in the 55 and fourth in the 400 to lead the Montville boys to a sixth-place finish with 24 points in North Jersey, Section 1, Group 3.

Tommy Rhodes won the shot put with a personal best 54-9, No. 7 in the state this season, and **Brendan Kenny** captured the 55 dash in 6.65 to lead Delbarton to a third place finish with 32 points at the NJCTC Championships this past Sunday at Jersey City Armory. **Luke Mayer** added a fourth finish in the hurdles (8.14) for Delbarton.

COMING UP

The State Group Championships are on tap for this Saturday and Monday at the Bennett Center in Toms River.

The Groups 1-4 meets that were scheduled for Friday, Feb. 14, were postponed due to the snow until Monday at 4 p.m. at the Bennett Center.

The top six finishers in each event in each group, plus six wild cards from the six group meets combined, will advance to the **Meet of Champions on Feb. 22** at the Bennett Center.

GROUP STATE CHAMPIONSHIP SCHEDULE

All meets are at the Bennett Center in Toms River

SATURDAY-Groups 2-3, 9 a.m. (make up date-Tuesday, 4 p.m.)

SATURDAY-Non Public A and B, 3:30 p.m. (make up date-Wednesday, 4 p.m.)

MONDAY-Groups 1-4, 4 p.m.

GROUP PERFORMANCE LISTS

[GROUPS 2-3 PERFORMANCE LISTS](#)

[GROUPS 1-4 PERFORMANCE LISTS](#)

[NON-PUBLIC A AND B PERFORMANCE LISTS](#)

HISTORY

Every indoor team group champion is [here](#).

Meet records for every group and the overall records are [here](#).

Every indoor Meet of Champions winner is [here](#).

